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also, and in the same way, is the chapter on the disputed election of 1876.

Some minuter criticisms suggest themselves. I think, for instance, that in the account of the final break between Grant and President Johnson, in 1867, Mr. Rhodes is far too lenient to Grant. Perhaps he has not seen a revival of that controversy in the *New York Herald* (May 27, 1878), and a contribution then made to it from the diary of Gideon Welles. But to mention such instances in which one dissents from Mr. Rhodes's views would be misleading. In a far greater number of instances, I feel sure, intelligent readers, particularly if they have some familiarity with his material, will find themselves sur-rendering preconceptions to accept his judgments.

There is nothing about these new volumes to suggest any fresh discussion of Mr. Rhodes's way of writing history. In style, they are uniform with their predecessors. It is true that I have twice, greatly to my surprise, detected Mr. Rhodes in something that looks decidedly like phrase-making. Grant, while President, accepts the gift of a horse and buggy "with oriental nonchalance". The city of Geneva is the "staid chamberlain of mighty issues" (VI. 375). But in general what has been said of the earlier volumes is as true of these. They have the same quality of heavy, awkward strength. There is the same absence of fine writing, and the same freedom from any striving after it; the same apparent disregard of form in paragraphs; rather more sentences than usual, perhaps, that are clumsy with a clumsiness which one perfectly understands, instead of being skilful with the kind of elaborate cleverness which one frequently fails to understand; and there is, if anything, an even heightened contempt for punctuation marks, particularly for the comma.

The index is by Mr. David M. Matteson.

WILLIAM GARROTT BROWN.

*Four Centuries of the Panama Canal.* By WILLIS FLETCHER JOHNSON. (New York: Henry Holt and Company. 1906. Pp. xxi, 461.)

A JOURNALIST'S history; so attested by the contents, the style, and even by the preface. Years of service as a newspaper correspondent have given Mr. Johnson much familiarity with the Isthmian Canal project during the past decade. It was a simple task to recast, recapitulate, "read up" the past, and make a history. If the book had been named according to its emphasis rather than according to the extreme limit of dates covered, it had better been called "Four Years of the Panama Canal." The first 396 years are treated in the first third of the book, and the events of really less than four full years fill the remaining two-thirds.

Mr. Johnson made a book of what he knew, and in some cases of what he thought he knew. The mature, thorough, patient, scholarly historian has not yet busied himself with the Canal, or for that matter,

with Spanish America. When the patient student does consider the Canal, he will be like Mr. Johnson, in contact with a big field, tempting the writer to run far afield into the widely separated corners where lie the problems and the records of diplomacy, politics, international law, engineering, sanitation, and the geographic influences which have here held the affairs of man in a savage, ruthless, molding grip.

From all this activity, the one-volume writer must indeed choose, and it may be that Mr. Johnson has not wandered unnecessarily; but a perusal of the book calls to mind the fact that the journalist's field includes all that is interesting. That which was in its recent day good news or good "filler" for a metropolitan daily has gone into that part of the book dealing with the Panama Canal since the American government took active hold of the project. The other one-third of the book is a summary, an introduction, and in the choice of material one sometimes wonders; for example, why there should have been included a reproduction of a map of the world as conceived by Ptolemy. The interesting and spectacular thirty years' work of the French companies is dismissed with a brief thirty pages, including a chapter of analysis to show why they failed rather than what they did. The French period was followed by nearly a decade of American investigation and legislation. We sent commission after commission and had report after report, a large amount of congressional action, national ferment, and dickering with the French company, and the final purchase of the French possessions by the United States government. This period the author covers in twenty-two pages. Apparently he was not journalistically connected at this time.

The author begins to expand the subject with the events of 1902. Here we see more traces of journalistic origin, for this is the time when Colombia began to lay plans for the capture of the canal millions, and thereby made what the newspapers called news and printed as such at great length. These iniquities are pointed out and the negotiations described in full. Then follows a full account of the Panama Revolution and of later Isthmian politics. The book might almost be called "The Politics and Administration of the Panama Canal since 1902," for the Colombian and Panama incidents are followed by an account of Taft's pacifying mission (of which party Mr. Johnson was a member) and of the turmoil at Washington over the details of administration and the problems of construction.

Evidently the author's turn of mind is more for politics than for engineering. There is a surprising paucity of engineering matter, and it is certainly to be hoped that the various political events upon which he poses as an authority are more correctly conceived in his mind than is the physical appearance of the Canal itself. He actually prints a full-page map of Panama and the Canal in which the canal is laid down according to old plans which were abandoned several years ago and therefore have no relation whatever to the canal which the

Commission is building. There is almost nothing of the economic or commercial aspects of the Canal.

Considerable space is given to description of the people, country, and climate of the little republic, and an appendix of forty-nine pages contains the text of treaties, proclamations, bills, etc. The book shows its newspaper origin by such glaring inaccuracies as those referred to above, by the fact that it comes quite down to the date of publication, by its newspaper English, and by its readability. It is interesting reading, and we need for easy consultation such an account of the origin and progress of the Panama Republic and its relations with the United States.

J. RUSSELL SMITH.

#### MINOR NOTICES

*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, new series, volume XX. (London, Office of the Society, 7 South Square, Gray's Inn, W. C.). The presidential address by the Rev. Dr. William Hunt treats of the nature and claims of the study of history. In a valuable paper entitled "A Chapter in Roman Frontier History", Professor H. F. Pelham presents some of the results of the labors of the German Imperial Frontier Commission (Reichslimes-Kommission) revealing the successive stages in the extension of Roman control over the territory east of the Rhine; and the various measures employed for the defense of this territory. Sir Harry Poland gives the correct text (hitherto unpublished) of Mr. Canning's "Rhyming Despatch" to Sir Charles Bagot, and defends Canning against the charge of ill-timed frivolity. Dr. J. Holland Rose shows that the secret intelligence received by Canning from Tilsit and elsewhere from July 16 to 23, 1807, although not logically complete, had a cumulative force which will make us hesitate to censure Canning for basing thereon his policy of coercing Denmark. "The Northern Policy of George I. to 1718" is discussed by Mr. J. F. Chance, who has contributed several articles on various phases of this subject to the *English Historical Review*. Miss Violet Shillington traces "The Beginnings of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance" from the twelfth to the end of the fifteenth century. In his paper on "The Study of Nineteenth Century History" Mr. Percy Ashley laments the neglect by English students and investigators of the recent history of European states, especially those of the continent. He urges the importance of the study and tries to show that neither the nature of the material nor the difficulty of "detachment" presents insuperable obstacles to its scientific investigation. The Rev. John Willcock's account of "Sharp and the Restoration Policy in Scotland" reaches conclusions very unfavorable to both objects of his inquiry. The Alexander Prize Essay, by Miss R. R. Reid, is an interesting study of the local causes and aspects of "The Rebellion of the Earls, 1569."

F. G. D.